

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 09235 071827Z

64

ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, PE

SUBJECT: SENIOR OFFICER ARRESTED IN GRAFT INVESTIGATION

1. GOP ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 6 THE PROVISIONAL DETENTION OF RETIRED MAJOR GENERAL ENRIQUE VALDEZ ANGULO WHO WAS EX-PRESIDENT VELASCO'S MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE FOR THIRTY MONTHS, 1971-74. THE ANNOUNCEMENT SAID THE GENERAL'S DETENTION CAME AFTER TWO DAYS OF INTERROGATION BY A SPECIAL COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING SCANDALS IN THE NATIONAL FOOD ADMINISTRATION (EPSA). IRONICALLY, MINISTER OF INTERIOR CAMPOS QUESADA TOLD REPORTERS NOVEMBER 5 THAT ONLY NINE PERSONS WHO "AT THIS TIME ARE ALL CIVILIANS" HAD BEEN DETAINED IN THE CURRENT MORALIZATION CAMPAIGN.

2. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH A FEW GENERALS HAVE OCCASIONALLY BEEN PUT UNDER SURVEILLANCE OR EVEN HOUSE ARREST, AS IS THE CASE NOW WITH FORMER FISHERIES MINISTER TANTALEAN, THIS IS THE FIRST INSTANCE OF DETENTION, AND A WELL PUBLICIZED ONE AT THAT, OF A SENIOR OFFICER. VALDEZ ANGULO WAS INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PERUVIAN REVOLUTION FROM ITS INCEPTION UNTIL HE WAS EASED OUT IN NOVEMBER 1974. IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT THEN PRESIDENT VELASCO QUASHED AN INVESTIGATION INTO IRREGULARITIES IN EPSA FOOD DISTRIBUTION. BY ALLOWING VALDEZ TO RETIRE HONORABLY, VELASCO HOPED TO SAVE THE GENERAL'S HONOR AND SPARE THE ARMY AS AN INSTITUTION AND THE MILITARY REGIME AN EMBARRASSING INQUIRY.

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Message Attributes

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